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ABSTRACT

This handbook describes activities and strategies that have been used successfully by community organizations to promote school desegregation. The information presented is based, in part, on findings from the Rand Corporation's evaluation of the nonprofit organization program of the Emergency School Aid Act. Specific actions and strategies that seem to contribute to citizen group success in particular phases of school desegregation are discussed. It is pointed out that citizen groups that have successfully modified school desegregation have usually chosen a strategy that can be described as "political" or "activist." Reference is made to the importance of strong leadership and leadership style in any group concerned with facilitating desegregation. Characteristics of strong community group leaders are described and steps that might be taken by community group leaders to make their groups more effective are suggested. (Author/EB)

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FACILITATING DESEGREGATION: A HANDBOOK FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Prepared for the U.S. Office of Education
Department of Health, Education, and Welfare

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U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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PREFACE

This handbook describes activities and strategies that have been used successfully by community organizations to promote school desegregation. The handbook is based in part on findings from The Rand Corporation's evaluation of the nonprofit organization (NPO) program of the Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA). The NPO program provides financial assistance to community organizations to support local education agencies' efforts to desegregate, or to reduce minority group isolation. The Rand Corporation's evaluation of the NPO program was conducted for the Office of Planning, Budgeting and Evaluation (OPBE) of the U.S. Office of Education under Contract No. 300-76-0311. This handbook is one product of that contract.

The handbook is addressed to the leaders and staff of community organizations working to help desegregate the public schools, and to education professionals interested in the role of community organizations in promoting school desegregation. Viewpoints and conclusions contained in the handbook are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion or policy of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare or The Rand Corporation.

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is written for use by leaders and members of citizen groups who are working to help desegregate local public schools. Citizen groups are a major influence in successful desegregation. As parents and as community residents, their members have high stakes in the outcome of school desegregation efforts.

The handbook is based in part on a national study of citizen group participation in local school desegregation. The study indicated that two critical decisions by citizen groups influenced their success. The first decision involved the group's choice of an overall strategy for action. The second decision involved the choice of specific activities within the overall strategy. As we will see, not every strategy contributes to success in promoting school desegregation. On the other hand, some activities work better than others, depending in part on the progress of school desegregation. The handbook is organized around a discussion of these two issues--strategy and tactics.

Chapter I discusses the kinds of specific actions that seem to contribute to citizen group success in particular phases of school desegregation. Actions taken at early stages may not be appropriate at later stages. Chapter II discusses the choice of strategies. Citizen groups that have successfully modified school desegregation have usually chosen a strategy that can be described as "political" or "activist." Chapter III covers the organization and leadership of citizen groups.

This handbook is intended as a guide only, and the practices reported here are not guaranteed to make school desegregation work. However, the ideas presented are derived from research on citizen groups across the United States and have often worked well.

These strategies and tactics represent the hard work of many citizens, sometimes helped by funds from government and private agencies, sometimes operating on their own funds. One source of

funds has been the United States Office of Education (USOE) through the Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA) passed by the U.S. Congress in 1972. These funds go to local school districts and to citizen groups to help them develop successful school desegregation activities.[1]

One provision of the act makes money available to citizen groups for support of school desegregation. These funds are given to new or preexisting citizen groups that can qualify as nonprofit organizations and that propose activities judged by federal officials to be likely to advance school desegregation.

When the U.S. Office of Education contracted with The Rand Corporation to conduct an evaluation of the NPO program, Rand researchers visited 40 communities and gathered information about more than 300 citizen groups. Each community was then described in a "case study." The research evaluation measured the success of each citizen group on the basis of its effectiveness in making a positive difference in facilitating desegregation. Of the 300 or so groups, only some were judged to be successful and only some of those were receiving ESAA funds.[2]

The citizen groups most often judged successful had adopted a strategy that can be described as "political" or "activist" in that they brought about changes in the way decisions are made in school districts. Those judged less successful most often had adopted a strategy of providing some form of direct service to students, such as tutoring.

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[1]For further information the reader may contact: The Office of Equal Educational Opportunity Program, USOE, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202.

[2]R-2312/3-HEW, *An Evaluation of the Emergency School Aid Act Nonprofit Organization Program: Vol. III, The Role of Community Organizations in Facilitating School Desegregation*, The Rand Corporation, December 1978. Other volumes in the series include: R-2312/1-HEW, *Vol. I, An Analysis of Federal Program Implementation and Funding Procedures*; R-2312/2-HEW, *Vol. II, A Description of Local Program Operations*; and R-2312/4-HEW, *Vol. IV, Conclusions and Policy Recommendations*.

I. THE CHOICE OF ACTIVITIES

Certain citizen group activities are more effective at some stages of desegregation than at others. Some activities appear less effective at any stage, if by effective we mean activities designed to change the conditions of school desegregation. Such activities as tutoring, counseling, and the like, although easy to describe, relatively easy to manage, and humane in intent, do not seem to affect desegregation much.

Not all of the activities possible are appropriate for all organizations. Members must decide which ones are possible in any particular context. However, all of them have been employed somewhere in the United States and seem to have promoted the cause of school desegregation.

PREIMPLEMENTATION (Phase I)

This stage of school desegregation is defined as the stage in which the schools are still segregated, and there is little or no activity designed to modify the situation.

In this stage, successful citizen groups have used combinations of political and legal action. Groups generally have had three options:

1. Get the school board to move voluntarily.
2. Attempt to replace opponents on the school board.
3. Go to court to seek relief.

Convincing the school board to take voluntary action seems to require a great deal of influence. In a few communities the League of Women Voters was instrumental in prodding the school board to take voluntary steps. League members studied the issue and made a report to the school board, calling on members to vote for policies supporting school desegregation.

In another community the school administration appointed a large citizen task force and charged the members to find means for achieving school desegregation. In another city a long-standing committee on public education prompted the school board to take action. In a large city a chamber of commerce task force raised the issue, wrote major portions of the school desegregation plan, and influenced the school board to adopt it. Successful citizen groups have been able to mobilize community leaders who in turn can influence the school board.

Attempts to replace opponents of school desegregation have occurred in some places. In two communities citizen groups were able to get courts to overturn at-large election procedures so that elections could be held by district. In some cases black school board members were elected for the first time.

In another instance a citizen group successfully lobbied the city council to hold open hearings before making appointments to the school board. Active opponents of school desegregation were identified, and the city council did not appoint them, since opposition to school desegregation was in opposition to law. In another community the same result was accomplished by holding "candidates' nights" prior to elections. Candidates opposed to school desegregation were identified and campaigned against. In another community a group of school volunteers organized in support of a candidate. Their work was responsible for the election of the candidate they supported. Finally, in a few communities persons who were influential in minority communities have given support or withheld it depending on a candidate's views on school desegregation.

Use of the option of filing suit to gain relief is not as uncommon as it may seem. Although historically suits have been filed by such well-known groups as the Legal Defense and Education Fund, Inc., recent events have shown that even a small group, such as one the research team studied in a large city, can bring suit with relative ease.

PREIMPLEMENTATION (Phase II)

This stage can be defined as one in which the schools are segregated, but action is under way to move toward desegregation. At this stage, either the decision to desegregate has been made but no plan has been developed, or the decision to desegregate has been made and a plan has been developed.

Desegregation Plan Not Developed

Among the critical activities at this juncture are those stressing the inevitability of school desegregation. It also helps to convince the general population that other communities have been successful, that community leaders support desegregation, and that, whatever the plan, school desegregation will go smoothly. In one medium-sized community a coalition group held seminars all around the city, bringing in citizens from other communities to discuss what they had done to achieve desegregation. In that same community the district superintendent formed a large "blue ribbon" advisory committee to the school board and charged it with helping to achieve success. In two smaller communities, coalition groups held many forums and coffees to inform citizens about national trends, about successes in other cities, and about the particular conditions of the two home cities. In another medium-sized city a coalition sponsored forty highway billboards calling for support of school desegregation. The coalition published an "Honor Roll" of 500 community leaders who supported school desegregation. In each of these cases the citizens were told that the question of whether desegregation would occur was no longer a question. The question before the community was the shape of the desegregation plan.

Another critical activity at this stage is to attempt to influence the shape of the plan. Community group influence in shaping the plan is important so that district officials can argue that the plan is partly the work of "responsible" citizens. Sometimes a court will insist that a plan be based on widespread citizen involvement. In other cases a school district may invite citizen involvement or comment. In still other cases a court may insist

on citizen group review before deciding on a plan. Finally, citizen groups have sued to have the right to participate in the development of a plan. The community must see that the plan is a serious thoughtful attempt to do what is right and best for all of the community's children. The public must also be convinced that despite inconveniences, their children's education continues to be uppermost in the minds of school officials.

Desegregation Plan Developed

Once the plan has been developed, the key activities are to help the community get ready for implementation. Forums, coffees, and other means have been used to provide information about how the plan will affect the children. In one community a citizen group was the primary source of accurate information about the plan because the school board was reluctant to release details. In another community a citizen group published a newsletter which was the most thorough and accurate available source of information about the background of the plan and the plan itself. Citizen groups in other communities established telephone answering stations to give parents accurate information about how they would be affected. All of these activities were designed to reduce parent anxiety caused by fear of the unknown.

Support from community leaders is important at this stage. In one city the chamber of commerce moved quickly to convince citizens that peaceful desegregation was vital to the community. Chamber members asked school district officials to express support. The chamber enlisted business support and purchased extra equipment and materials for the affected schools. They also installed two-way radios in all schoolbuses to assure parents that a bus breakdown would be reported immediately.

In two communities citizen groups organized in-school human relations workshops, designed to help students get ready for implementation by encouraging them to openly discuss some of their concerns and fears. In another community a citizen group sponsored visits and open houses so that parents and students could learn

about the schools the children would be attending. Each of these activities was designed to ease tension among parents and students who might be worried about unknown conditions.

Finally, citizen groups have sponsored workshops for school staffs, designed to give teachers and principals an opportunity to deal with their concern about facing new and sometimes unknown conditions.

At preimplementation stages, successful citizen groups have worked to secure endorsements from community leaders, to convince citizens that desegregation was inevitable, to ease anxieties and fears caused by lack of information, and to convince the community that desegregation would go smoothly.

EARLY IMPLEMENTATION STAGE

This stage is usually defined as the first year or two of implementation of a school desegregation plan. The first four to six months normally represent the crucial time of this stage.

Let us assume that school district staff are implementing the plan competently, are working to create a positive environment, and that the supporting mechanisms (bus schedules, academic enrichment, including multicultural education programs and the like) are in place and operating.

Citizen groups have important tasks to accomplish during this phase. We have already referred to activities designed to gain and hold the support of community leaders. In one community the chamber of commerce instituted an "Adopt a School" plan in which local businesses pledged financial and personal support for programs in designated schools.

In these early days of implementation, successful community groups have operated rumor control centers that provide accurate information to parents who become fearful when they hear distressing rumors. Citizen groups have also organized volunteers to ride on buses where busing was required. In one community a citizen group prepared multicultural and human relations materials which were

presented by other parents during the bus ride. In another city citizen groups arranged for "host" families who were available to give general help to children attending a new school.

In still other communities citizen groups operated crisis intervention centers, designed to receive early information if racial or other tensions were thought to be increasing in a school. Center staff were able to contact other parents or experts who could then go to the school to help calm the situation. In another community a citizen group organized parent volunteers at each receiving school so that fearful or timid children could see that many adults were in and around the school. Finally, one citizen group organized a telephone tree so that many parents could be notified about the daily or weekly progress of implementation. All of these activities aim at calming parent and child anxiety over being placed in strange surroundings.

Also in this stage, citizen groups can continue to promote healthy human relations. We gave examples above of citizen participation in developing and conducting human relations workshops for students and teachers. These activities should be continued if the school district is supportive. In communities where the district has been unwilling to let parents conduct such workshops, citizen groups have encouraged the district to institute its own program of intergroup relations. In one community a minority teacher established such a program in a newly desegregated high school.

Citizen groups can also increase parent participation in daily school activities. One successful citizen group started a broad scale program of citizen participation in setting goals for the schools, thereby bringing to the forefront a wide variety of unmet needs, which they urged the district to meet. In another community a citizen group was able to get the school board to authorize parent councils to give advice to professional staff and to provide information about conditions that seemed to impede successful desegregation. In other communities citizen groups sought to get parents to come to school for a day to observe the school program. All of these activities

offer parents an opportunity to see how the schools are dealing with their children. This encourages the school, under the principal's leadership, to reach out in nontraditional ways, and make parents feel that they are valuable and wanted; that their contributions make a genuine difference to their children's futures.

Early implementation must be conducted smoothly and with optimism, showing care and feeling for children's sensibilities. Although the role of citizen groups is valuable, the responsibility for successful implementation rests with the professional staff. Successful citizen groups encourage school staffs to continue to act in professionally responsible ways.

MATURE IMPLEMENTATION STAGE

The mature implementation stage runs from about the end of the second year until such time as school desegregation is "institutionalized" in a community. In general, five categories of activity are promoted by citizen groups during this stage: direct service, parent involvement, student advocacy, affirmative action in employment, and monitoring.

Service

Direct services have composed the major share of ESAA/NPO activities. They typically involve after-school tutoring in basic subjects, either on the schoolgrounds or at some other location. They include counseling for dropout prevention, for career choice, for personal adjustment, and for college-going, as well as the creation of street academics and "stop-out" schools. They have provided students with referral services to other social agencies, such as medical or legal clinics.

These direct service activities seek to supplement or enrich the regular experiences the students receive from the schools. Despite their serious motives, there is little evidence that these projects do much to change the overall system. On the contrary, because they relieve schools of the "burden" of working with

"difficult" children, the schools may not be motivated to deal with these problems themselves; thus broad changes in school district policies and procedures may be discouraged. For example, children who received direct tutoring generally were not placed in different classes or academic tracks.

Another form of direct service is to parents. Some community groups have provided services designed to build interaction skills among parents. These services generally train parents to be assertive without being perceived as aggressive or hostile. Other training activities have included providing parents with information about their rights under Title I or Head Start or other federally funded programs, with training in being an effective parent, or organizing parent groups, or asking questions of school staff, or knowing the rights of their children. Each activity provides parents with information and skills that will help them influence the school's treatment of their children. Each can also help parents become effective participants in school affairs.

Parent Involvement

There are three types of parent involvement activities. The first--involvement as tutors and aides and in other supporting roles--is generally not useful in promoting change in the desegregation process. The second type includes those activities designed to influence school programs. This is a delicate matter, requiring tact and careful organization. Citizen groups that have used it have generally provided for collaboration between a recognized outside-the-school organization and parent volunteers working in the school. The school volunteers provide information and ideas to the outside group which, in turn, comes to the school with proposed changes in procedures or programs. The school volunteers then give quiet support to these changes by interacting with teachers and other school staff; they ease the fears of the school staff by pointing out that the changes do not threaten professional rights and do improve conditions at the school.

The third type of parent involvement is "political," i.e., designed to change the decisionmaking process of a school or a district. These activities are intended to give parents direct influence over school programs. Successful implementation of these activities has required support from the school board in some cases. Legislative help has been available under such federal programs as Title I of ESEA or in state programs that mandate citizen advisory councils or school-site parent councils. Success of such councils, however, seems to depend on three conditions. First, parents must be well enough organized to control disputes among themselves. Second, parents should not debate processes or technical matters. They must insist on defining objectives, such as the reduction of playground fighting, leaving the procedural matters to school staff and avoiding responsibility for implementation. Finally, parents must be prepared to be persevering; school desegregation is a lengthy process, not an isolated event.

Student Advocacy

Successful citizen groups supporting student advocacy have tended to engage in such activities as fact-finding, crisis intervention, and representation of students facing suspension or expulsion. There is always an effort to insure that each student is treated with equity. The most successful examples of this form of student advocacy have been accomplished by citizen groups, working quietly but steadily, who have presented themselves as wanting to solve problems and not as wanting publicity or seeking hostile confrontation with school principals or teachers. They acted to assure that students were being treated professionally and fairly by school officials. In instances of demonstrable inequity, these groups appealed the decisions to higher officials, the school board, or to the courts. They acted with strength, but they did not bully the school district.

More general kinds of student advocacy activities have been used. In one instance two black students were to be left behind from a major trip to be taken by the school band, ostensibly because of lack of funds. Since they were the only two black students in the band, some question about motive was raised. Public interest led

to new practices and revised student participation policies. In another instance no black students were elected as cheerleaders. Citizen group intervention altered the process of selection so that black students had an equal opportunity to become cheerleaders.

The last example clearly demonstrates the requirements of student advocacy strategies in mature stages of implementation. Unless individual cases are used to press the district to change its procedures, the need for intervention will continue. In one community a citizen group threatened suit to force the district to create and use due process procedures prior to suspending or expelling a student. In another district, citizen group influence prompted changes in the way students were selected for student government positions. Frequently, unfair treatment of individual students results from the existence of unfair procedures or structures. If equity is to be achieved, these structures and procedures must be modified.

Affirmative Employment

Some successful community groups have taken affirmative action in employment as their chief activity. In one community the chamber of commerce took the lead. In another community a citizen group, acting through a local human rights commission, persuaded the district to hire more minority teachers and administrators even though the school population was declining.

School Monitoring

Simply stated, monitoring is an act of observing the workings of a school, usually under court supervision, and recording instances of inequity and making recommendations for changes in behavior or procedures. Effective monitoring requires that recommendations be acted upon. Monitoring is sometimes supported with district funds, particularly when mandated by a court. However, in some communities where school officials favored school desegregation, volunteer citizen groups have implemented monitoring programs. In some

communities citizen groups have received reports from teachers or students about unfair practices, relieving the citizen group of the cost of direct observation. Some inequities are easy to observe and monitor; others are more subtle. Many checklists have been developed as guides to observation.

School monitoring is expensive. People have to go to the schools to observe; records and procedures must be checked, conversations held with staff and students, reports filed, and recommendations made. Finally, changes must be made on the basis of recommendations. But all this effort often results in more effective school desegregation.

II. THE CHOICE OF STRATEGIES

The effective activities described in Chapter I were based on the notion that a citizen group had chosen an overall strategy of political activism. The choice is important for it greatly influences the course of events.

In choosing to influence the course of school desegregation processes, citizen groups are also choosing to influence educational policy matters. They are acting "political" by trying to bring about one kind of decision rather than another. In this process they express preferences (values) which may be in conflict with the preferences of other citizens or school district officials.

Sometimes citizens view these potential conflicts as disruptive and shy away from pressing for the adoption of their views. This handbook argues that such conflict is not necessarily bad--in fact, an assertive style by citizen groups appears to help facilitate school desegregation. Healthy disagreements between citizen groups and school officials may help produce more effective school desegregation.

Citizen group leaders must face, early in the game, the hard questions of choice of strategies. They must decide what kind of group they wish to be and what kinds of activities they will undertake. In the national study of citizen groups the choice almost always was made between two alternatives: to be a political action group, risking open conflict with school officials; or to be an education/service group, providing educational experiences to students and parents. The study found that the least successful groups were ones that chose the educational/service option, providing such services as general educational enrichment, counseling, expanded extracurricular opportunities, and the like. The most successful groups chose more overtly political actions such as disseminating information, attempting to influence the shape and scope of school desegregation plans, attempting to modify hiring practices, and attempting to change the way decisions were made.

The national study found that providing educational services did not change the course of events. While such services were likely to be of personal value to those who received them, they had little effect on the progress of implementing school desegregation. This finding is not unexpected. Implementation of a school desegregation plan is a policy matter. Policy matters generally require changes in the structures and functions of school systems, based on deliberate actions to introduce new procedures or new structural relationships. Direct services--tutoring, for example--do not directly influence the organization as a whole.

If a citizen group adopts political activism, it faces a series of major decisions about implementing that strategy. These decisions usually involve finding answers to two questions: What is appropriate political action? and What should be done about joining other groups in forming coalitions?

POLITICAL ACTION

Advocacy and assertiveness are not the same as public disruption or violence. Successful activist groups were able to influence school districts without appearing unreasonable or irresponsible. Successful groups made public demands at school board meetings or in the media. But they had well-researched arguments and their requests could well be met by the local school district.

For example, citizen groups in several school districts have succeeded in influencing school district desegregation policies. They have defined the issue with care, making sure that it is clear and stated in terms of what is best for children or citizens. They generally have conducted studies, such as surveys of those affected, and have written a research report or position paper based on their findings. They then have made presentations to the school board and requested appropriate policy changes. They have also tried to get widespread media coverage for their study and have made personal, private appeals to individual school board members in attempts to influence their votes. They have been careful to avoid being "tagged"

as for or against a particular desegregation technique, such as busing. Instead they have tried to appear to help the school district solve its problems, by proposing reasonable compromises without retreating from their main objectives.

The important question facing citizen groups is to determine how much and what kind of political action is appropriate or possible. Political action can be either relatively easy or very hard depending on several factors. Community groups that have a great deal of influence in a town, or that get commitments from those who do, can more easily engage in political action. They have succeeded in influencing school boards in several ways: in the adoption of policies promoting school desegregation; the declaration of board intent to implement the policies; and the drafting and carrying out of implementation plans. In these cases, a majority of the school board members have come into public sessions and cast votes in favor of these policies.

Successful community groups have employed a variety of tactics to accomplish these ends. They have threatened suit and they have sued. In one large city a small group of citizens banded together and with the help of a sympathetic law firm brought suit successfully against the school district. One consequence was that the judge turned to them to provide the major influence in shaping the desegregation plan.

Citizen groups have lobbied school board members and other political figures, enlisting the aid of community leaders who became convinced that voluntary school desegregation was preferable to school desegregation under court mandate.

In some communities, citizen groups have changed a situation by campaigning to elect different school board members or by revising the processes for selecting school board members. In one community, one person built up a group of school volunteers which over a period of years grew to substantial size. These volunteers effectively lobbied for the election of two new school board members and are generally thought to have made the major difference in the election

of their candidates. In another community, a citizen group sued to force a change in the election of school board members--from election "at-large" to election by districts--thereby allowing the election of a black school board member. In another town, a community group forced the city council to hold open hearings with all candidates before the council exercised its authority to appoint school board members. This process identified active opponents of school desegregation and led to demands to disapprove their appointment to the school board.

Finally, successful community groups have worked to define the issue of school desegregation in appropriate ways for their communities. In some communities "quality education" has been made the issue. In other communities the issue has been defined as "obedience to the law" or as "ethnic diversity." Although we cannot predict what will be an acceptable definition in any one community, it is apparent that careful attention to issue definition is important political action.

Because questions of appropriate political action are so important strategically, a word about some questions that might be asked about any community is appropriate. Citizen group effectiveness depends partly on knowing about conditions that might affect action. If a group's objective is to elect school board members or to insure that school desegregation takes place without general community upheaval, knowledge of the community is essential. The following questions therefore seem worthwhile reviewing.

What Is the School District Like?

A good understanding of the school district is important to successful citizen groups. These groups understand the nature of selection or election to the school board. Successful groups have elected or blocked selection of candidates and have altered election and appointment procedures. To do so took an understanding of the dynamics of the process, including identifying likely candidates and knowing which groups always vote, which groups might vote if the issue were brought to them, and which groups should not be approached.

Successful groups understand and utilize the dynamics of school board decisionmaking. Some school boards have open meetings and may be swayed by facts and rational argument; other school boards conduct important business in private, using public sessions to ratify their decisions. Some school boards rely heavily on the recommendations of school administrators while others do not accept their recommendations. Some school boards decide disputed issues only after they have tested general public sentiment; others rely on the advice of a few influential citizens. Some school boards have members with particular strengths such as finance or curriculum or human relations to whom the other members turn for advice on those issues. Some boards have strong internal leadership while others do not. Successful citizen groups know the answers to these issues and use their knowledge to influence policy directions.

Successful groups also learn about general school district matters. They know who the key administrators are. They have information about the position key employee groups are likely to have on an important issue. They understand the budget and the processes of budget-making and attempt to influence the expenditure of discretionary funds, particularly those from external sources. Successful groups point out that these funds need to be used to support school desegregation. In general, successful citizen groups know enough about the district to be able to identify desirable or undesirable effects of proposed actions.

What Is the Town Like?

Successful citizen groups have an understanding of the distribution of influence in the community. They know something about how decisions are made in general and how influential groups view the schools. Successful citizen groups have persuaded community leaders that school desegregation was necessary for the good health of the community.

Successful citizen groups have also thought about other aspects of the community, such as the extent of segregation or integration in housing, employment, and transportation. If the community is

mobilizing to achieve integration in other areas of public affairs, alliances have been struck with groups not directly associated with schools. In one community a local bank had made a commitment to integrated employment; its employees were released to work in the schools as volunteers. In another community, the chamber of commerce was persuaded to sponsor "executive loans" of businessmen who worked in the school district on particular projects.

COALITION FORMATION

A key question of strategy is whether a group should try to achieve its objectives by joining other groups to form a coalition. A review of the case studies indicates that coalitions are often effective instruments for action. Coalitions increase the resources available to influence the district, and they provide protection to member groups that may be vulnerable to attack. However, coalitions are not always easy to form and are often difficult to sustain. Difficulties arise from three sources: (1) trying to find a common interest, (2) struggles for "control," and (3) keeping coalition activities separate from those of participating member organizations.

Coalitions are often made up of groups with different interests. To encourage these groups to continue their membership, coalition activities should not compete with or contradict the groups' activities and directions. Successful coalitions have fairly simple purposes which are made clear to member organizations. Such activities as information dissemination, promoting peaceful acceptance of a plan, and prompting fair treatment of students have been successful coalition activities.

Coalitions sometimes break apart over questions of control. Two types of conflict seem to occur. In the first type one or a few member organizations seek to establish their own objectives as the coalition's objectives. In the second type, individuals battle over coalition leadership. Successful coalitions have addressed these possibilities and have established procedures for resolving them.

Coalitions can lose their effectiveness because of the actions of a member organization. The member organization intentionally or unintentionally allows the general public to believe that it is acting on behalf of the coalition when it is not, thereby frequently bringing discredit to the coalition. Successful coalitions have procedures for taking action to prevent this.

Forming or joining a coalition is an important strategic decision. Coalitions can accomplish purposes not otherwise possible. However, members must give up some degree of autonomy and must reach compromises with other members. Successful coalitions require careful tending and a willingness by member organizations to give up some things in order to receive the benefits of the coalition.

SUMMARY

This chapter has asked what general strategy seemed to have the best chance for facilitating school desegregation. The answer was that successful citizen groups chose a political activist strategy in which they sometimes joined or formed coalitions in order to engage in political/legal activities designed to change the nature of a local school district or its policies. Examples demonstrated that activist citizen groups direct their resources to the political processes of changing the policies and procedures of school systems. Successful citizen groups were assertive and demanding. They did not, however, engage in disruptive or violent behavior. Instead they used their resources to create steady influence on school district officials, school board members, and other important citizens. Successful citizen groups understood the political dynamics of their communities, and they were active in changing the way political action occurred.

III. LEADERSHIP IN CITIZEN GROUPS

Although many citizen groups are composed of volunteers and although many are as small as six to ten members, a citizen group is faced with many of the same questions faced by larger groups that have paid employees.

This chapter is based on information not contained in the "case study" reports developed by Rand. It is based more on field observations and on some general ideas about citizen groups developed from the author's prior research and observations.

Leadership of any organization is no easy task. Leadership of volunteer organizations is harder because so much depends on the willingness of members to devote themselves outside of their regular responsibilities as parents, wage earners, spouses, and so on.

A chief task of leadership is to ensure that the organization has a clear focus which is understood and accepted by the members. An organization should have a fairly small set of clear objectives if it is to be successful, as pointed out in the earlier discussion of strategies. Citizen groups that were able to decide on a specific strategy (political action) were more successful than organizations that chose an alternate (service).

Part of the success of a citizen group depends on the "style" of the leadership. But leadership style, although important, is not easy to discuss. Effective leaders are perceived as principled but pragmatic, reliable and honest, and not promising what cannot be delivered. They are perceived as willing to help the school district solve its problems, and they do not create problems that appear insoluble to the people they try to influence. They avoid public confrontation and seldom bring public embarrassment on school officials. Although they may demonstrate intense anger in private, the public behavior of effective leaders is generally cool and polite. Leaders of effective citizen groups are careful about choosing issues. They do not take positions on every issue, but tend to reserve their stances for issues that promote their strategies. They establish "turf" so that school

officials come to know which issues are important to them and about which they must be consulted. Effective leaders have discovered ways to give credit to others when problems get solved. In short, effective leaders appear to others as responsible, reasonable, pragmatic individuals who are working from principles to make conditions better.

In addition to "style" and objectives, citizen groups, like others, should examine what resources they have available. Matching resources with objectives is an important task. If a group's strategy is political action, then it needs political strength. If the group does not control political resources, then it must work to gain them by forming coalitions or by using the resources it has to create the ones it needs. An example of this last strategy occurred in a medium-sized city. Parents volunteered their services as tutors or aides. As their services were accepted, other parents were recruited. After a time the leader convinced the volunteer group to work in a school election. The leader of the group was able to change one type of resource (parent time and commitment) into another (influence in school board politics). A critical leadership task, then, is to consider the resources of the organization in light of the objectives the organization is attempting to achieve.

Any volunteer organization, whether new or established, has some resources. The leaders should analyze them in detail, deciding which are secure and which could shrink because of events that cannot be controlled. Although the leaders of each organization should make a list appropriate for that organization, the categories shown below may be helpful.

Resources Available

Financial	Yes	Maybe	No
Money on hand			
Money that can be raised			
Use of services, such as mailing, clerical help, telephone			
Free advice from specialists			
Free office or other space			
Use of equipment or other materials			
Employment assistance or promised employment			

Knowledge	Yes	Maybe	No
Political experience			
Organizational experience			
Specialized knowledge			
Knowledge about how the town works			
Influence			
Community elections			
Visibility through the media			
Access to community leaders			
Past successes			
Membership time and loyalty			
Leadership time and loyalty			
Clear purpose			
Public perceptions of the organization			

Lacking any of the resources above should be considered a liability. For example, if the group's purpose requires that many hours be given by specially trained volunteers and the organization cannot get such volunteers, it is in a vulnerable position. If the purpose requires that alliances be made with other groups and the group's history is one of failure or irresponsibility, coalition formation will be difficult. If the group's leadership is perceived as using the school desegregation issue for personal political gain, support may not be available from groups sincerely committed to school desegregation. Finally, if the members are not convinced that the organization is serving their own interests, they may not stay involved very long.

The biggest liability, however, is a lack of clear focus on objectives. Unless the organization's members are clear about purpose they have no way of seeing progress, no way to plan strategies, and no way to decide what resources are needed or in what order they are needed. Unless the purpose is very clear, the chances of success are small.

One major organizational task is that of managing the organization, principally keeping the organization in focus. Someone must ask of each proposed activity how the activity furthers the organization's goals. Resources must not be spent on activities that are not related to the goals. Unsuccessful organizations drift. They lose focus and often deteriorate into collections of unrelated activities.

Another important task is to keep track of progress. Periodically a question must be asked about the group's accomplishments. Assessment should be made of the organization's success in making changes in the schools, of the costs it has encountered, of successful and unsuccessful activities, of the chances that members believe they have been effective when they have not, and of the requirements for further activity. As hard as these questions are to raise and answer they are necessary, because the group's opponents will be raising them about the group.

Still another task is that of controlling the flow of information. An organization's members, supporters, and potential supporters need to know what it is doing. They should be informed in ways that require little of their effort and that give them pleasure. Newsletters need to be well written and designed. Phone calls that are not answered or returned can alienate members and potential members. Leaders who are perceived as uninterested or too busy are discredited.

Persons whom the organization wants to influence also need to be informed. Because these people have their own criteria for assessment, an organization's leadership needs to discover how best to convince them that the organization is well managed, that it has good leadership, that it has direction and focus, and that it must be taken seriously.

In addition, relations with the media are tricky. Being referred to as "an important group" is a bonus for an organization. Being referred to as "radical" seems not to be very helpful. The most successful course of action appears to be to identify those persons who must be influenced and to target information toward them.

The final management task is to keep track of the money. If it cannot be accounted for, the organization may be in distress. In addition, care must be taken to ensure that money is being spent to accomplish the group's purposes. Citizen groups generally have few funds. If they are spent for activities that do not show promise of furthering the organization's objectives, the group often goes out of existence.

Although citizen groups are generally engaged in activities intended to bring about major social change, their leaders must not lose

sight of the fact that their organizations must be kept functioning. This fact requires care in understanding and exercising key leadership and management functions. If these tasks are not accomplished, the organization may well falter, meeting none of its objectives and making no difference in the matter of facilitating school desegregation.

IV. CONCLUSION

This is not a book of sure-fire school desegregation strategies or tactics. But it does argue that certain strategies and tactics appear to be more effective than others.

Groups of citizens face an essential question of choosing an appropriate strategy for facilitating school desegregation. Generally, the choice lies between a strategy of providing service (such as tutoring or helping in classrooms) and a strategy of fairly direct political action. Groups that choose the strategy of political action seem to be more effective, even though there is risk of becoming involved in political conflict. Successful political action groups have worked to modify the policies and procedures of school districts so that school desegregation could be facilitated. These groups have petitioned school boards, filed complaints with state and federal agencies, threatened court suit, sued school districts, generated support from influential members of communities, elected new school board members, and blocked election of persons to school boards.

What is common to the strategy is that citizen groups have acted politically. They have assessed the political situations of their towns and have generated such political resources as votes and access to decisionmakers. They have then kept pressure on school board members and school district officials. The successful citizen groups have worked to change the policies and procedures that govern an organization such as a school system. They have identified the policies and procedures that have slowed desegregation (such as student placement, teacher employment and placement, curriculum) and have kept up pressure to get them changed. They have, in effect, seen the issue as one in which "old ways of doing things" needed to be changed.

The political action strategies of successful citizen groups have not been strategies of militant or blind opposition to school district matters. Rather they have been careful, planned strategies designed to identify inequity in the system and to propose changes designed to reduce or eliminate the inequity.

As the choice of strategy is important, so too is the choice of a particular political activity. At the stage when the schools are segregated (preimplementation), successful activities are ones that get school desegregation recognized as an important issue. The important tasks are to assure school district policies that support desegregation, result in an equitable plan, and win support for it among influential citizens.

At the stage of early implementation the important activities are ones that facilitate implementation, reduce citizen concerns, and continue to convince citizens that the process is inevitable and is going smoothly.

At later stages of implementation, successful citizen groups monitor the process of desegregation and keep up pressures designed to ensure that school desegregation moves toward genuine school integration, in which all children receive an education adequate to their needs.

School desegregation is not an easy task. Citizen groups that have been successful in facilitating school desegregation have understood that it is a sustained process. They have elected strategies and tactics designed to change the structures of school systems, so that the systems themselves would be locked in to continued progress toward integrated education.